

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 SAJ-01 IO-10 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-06

AGR-05 /102 W

----- 119407

R 101700Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1825

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, UK, EEC

SUBJECT: WILSON REPORTS TO PARLIAMENT ON EC REFERENDUM

REF: LONDON 8666

SUMMARY - PRIME MINISTER WILSON, IN JUNE 9 STATEMENT TO
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HOUSE OF COMMONS, AFFIRMED THAT HMG WILL PLAY FULL, CON-

STRUCTIVE ROLE IN EC. RECEIVING CONGRATULATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF REFERENDUM FROM BACKBENCH AND OPPOSITION SPOKESMEN, HE ACKNOWLEDGED CONTRIBUTIONS OF FORMER CONSERVATIVE LEADER HEATH, LIBERAL LEADER THORPE, AND OTHERS. ANTI-MARKETEERS BENN, BIDWELL AND HEFFER PUBLICLY ACCEPTED DECISION OF ELECTORATE AND INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO WORK TO MAKE EC SUCCEED. PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY (PLP) WILL NOW BEGIN PROCESS OF SELECTING ITS DELEGATES TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. DELEGATION IS EXPECTED TO REFLECT FULL SPECTRUM OF PLP ATTITUDES TOWARD EC. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER HAROLD WILSON RECEIVED ENTHUSIASTIC KUDOS OF HOUSE OF COMMONS JUNE 9 IN FIRST PARLIAMENTARY SESSION SINCE JUNE 5 REFERENDUM ON EC (REFTEL). IN BRIEF STATEMENT TO HOUSE, WILSON STRESSED OVERWHELMING ENDORSEMENT OF CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP BY BRITISH VOTERS AND AFFIRMED THAT HMG WILL PLAY FULL AND CONSTRUCTIVE PART IN EC AFFAIRS. HE ALSO WELCOMED TUC LEADER JACK JONES' RECENT ASSURANCE THAT TUC WILL NOW TAKE ITS PLACE IN EC BODIES AND NOTED THAT PLP'S JOINT GOVERNMENT/BACKBENCH LIAISON COMMITTEE WILL BEGIN DELIBERATIONS ON SELECTION OF PLP DELEGATION TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. HE WAS VAGUE AS TO MEANS BY WHICH DELEGATES WOULD BE SELECTED, BUT EXPRESSED HOPE THAT DELEGATION WOULD REFLECT FULL RANGE OF PLP OPINION AND NOT BE LIMITED TO MEMBERS OF PRO-EC FACTION. WILSON ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FORMER CONSERVATIVE LEADER EDWARD HEATH, LIBERAL LEADER JEREMY THORPE AND HOME SECRETARY ROY JENKINS, AND HE EVEN HAD A KIND WORD FOR TORY ANTI-MARKETEER NEIL MARTEN. RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS, BUT ADROITLY DUCKING SUGGESTIONS OF LABOR PARTY DISUNITY OR REFERENCES TO THE ANTICIPATED CABINET SHAKE-UP, WILSON OPINED THAT ACTIONS OF SOME UNIDENTIFIED ANTI-MARKETEERS HAD HELPED PRO-MARKET CAUSE.

2. BRIEF INTERVENTION BY CONSERVATIVE LEADER MARGARET THATCHER SEEMED TO REVEAL SOME EMBARRASSMENT OVER HER ROLE IN CAMPAIGN AND WAS PARTIALLY DROWNED OUT BY CALLS OF LABOR BACKBENCHERS. THATCHER NOTED HEATH'S CON-

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TRIBUTION AND ARGUED THAT REFERENDUM RESULT CONFIRMED WISDOM OF EARLIER TORY GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO TAKE

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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BRITAIN INTO EC. LIBERAL LEADER THORPE ALSO SPOKE
BRIEFLY, CONGRATULATING PRIME MINISTER (ALBEIT WITH
POINTED IMPLICATION THAT HE HAD NOT PULLED HIS FULL
WEIGHT IN CAMPAIGN) AND HEATH. LABOR LEFT-WINGERS SYD
BIDWELL, ERIC HEFFER AND NORMAN ATKINSON REFERRED TO
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THEIR ORIGINAL HOSTILITY TOWARD EC BUT EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO ABIDE BY REFERENDUM VERDICT. (INDUSTRY SECRETARY BENN, DURING EARLIER MINISTERIAL QUESTION PERIOD, AFFIRMED HIS ACCEPTANCE OF DECISION AND PROMISED TO WORK CONSTRUCTIVELY TO CARRY OUT POPULAR WILL.) HUSH FELL OVER HOUSE WHEN ULSTER UNIONIST ENOCH POWELL ROSE TO ASK WILSON IF HE ACCEPTED PROPOSITION THAT REFERENDUM WAS NOT FINAL WORD ON BRITISH MEMBERSHIP AND THAT SUBSEQUENT PARLIAMENTS COULD REOPEN MEMBERSHIP QUESTION AT ANY TIME. WILSON ACKNOWLEDGED CONSTITUTIONAL ACCURACY OF POWELL'S ARGUMENT (DECISIONS OF ONE PARLIAMENT DO NOT BIND SUCCEEDING PARLIAMENTS), BUT SUGGESTED THAT OVERWHELMING AND UNPRECEDENTED POPULAR DECISION WOULD FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES BE BINDING ON LATER GOVERNMENTS.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH AN HISTORIC AND SOMEWHAT DRAMATIC OCCASION, NEITHER WILSON'S STATEMENT NOR HIS ARTFUL RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS CONTAINED ANY SURPRISES. AS USUAL HE REVEALED VIRTUALLY NO CLUES AS TO HIS NEXT MOVES. EVEN THE PROCEDURE FOR SELECTING PLP DELEGATES TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WAS UNDEFINED, THOUGH MOST BACKBENCHERS WE HAVE SPOKEN TO HOPE THE SELECTION WILL BE HANDLED BY THE LIAISON COMMITTEE RATHER THAN BY ELECTION. OF 36 SEATS ALLOCATED TO THE UK, 21 ARE CURRENTLY OCCUPIED BY TORIES AND LIBERALS. LABOR, HOWEVER, IS ENTITLED TO AT LEAST 18 SEATS, WHICH MEANS THE OTHER PARTIES WILL HAVE THEIR REPRESENTATION REDUCED ACCORDINGLY. THERE IS ALSO THE QUESTION OF THE NATIONALIST PARTIES WHICH ARE NOT NOW REPRESENTED. WHATEVER THE SELECTION MECHANISM, IT IS A GOOD BET THAT THE PLP DELEGATION WILL BE BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PLP AS A WHOLE.

RICHARDSON

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